



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SENATOR CLAITOR DISCUSSES THE PUBLIC'S RESPONSE TO HIS EFFORT TO
REPEAL THE DEATH PENALTY**

District 16 State Senator Dan Claitor (R-Baton Rouge) has filed Senate Bill 142 to abolish the death penalty for people who commit crimes after July 30th. The legislature will consider this measure at the upcoming Regular Legislative Session, which begins Monday, April 10th. The following is a statement by Senator Claitor on the measure:

"The response I have received from the public regarding my effort to repeal the death penalty in our state has been surprising, overwhelming, and gratifying. If this public reaction is indicative, there is a real chance this can become reality in this session of the Louisiana Legislature.

As a former criminal prosecutor in the Orleans Parish Office of District Attorney, I am well aware of the need to create an environment that is hostile to violent crime and criminals. Yet, the death penalty has failed as deterrence to such horrendous criminal activity. Moreover, the death penalty is rarely utilized in Louisiana, and, when it is, the costs of appeals in these cases are extraordinarily burdensome to our law-abiding taxpayers. As a result, I believe life imprisonment is a more efficient means for just punishment and protection of society.

As a Catholic, I am compelled to act on a moral basis relative to the death penalty. Life, both at the beginning and at the end, must be my primary consideration as a Catholic legislator. I take this moral impetus seriously. Unfortunately, currently, the emphasis seems too often to be about ending life at either the beginning and/or the end: the result of this emphasis is a coarsening of our society and humanity to such extent that life itself is devalued.

I have the great opportunity to work with former State Police Colonel and current Representative Terry Landry on this initiative. We are both from law enforcement. Having both served in the criminal justice system, we understand the practical aspects of this issue and, both being Catholics, share the same moral impetus.

We both look forward to seeing Louisiana make an extraordinary statement to our nation and world."

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